CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Previously Presented) A method of monitoring a network switch having a plurality of regular ports between which network traffic data packets are forwarded and an external mirror port, comprising:

selecting at least one of said regular ports;

mirroring a data packet of said selected port to said external mirror port;

extracting the network address information of said mirrored data packet;

determining port information of said network address information in response to said network address information extraction; and

performing network analysis of said network switch.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said port information comprises physical information.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said port information determination comprises interrogating said network switch to obtain said port information using said network address information.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein said interrogation comprises:

sending a first request to said network switch requesting a port index corresponding to said network address information; and

sending a second request to said network switch requesting said port information corresponding to said port index.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said network address information extraction and said port information determination are performed in an external monitor device.

6. (Cancelled).

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said port information determination comprises placing said mirrored data packet in a first-in-first-out buffer waiting for responses from said network switch.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said port information determination further comprises releasing said mirrored data packet from said first-in-first-out buffer after said network switch responds to said requests.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said port information determination further comprises releasing said mirrored data packet from said first-in-first-out buffer after a predetermined period of time.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising maintaining at least one lookup table correlating said network address information with said port information.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said network address information comprises a source address of said mirrored data packet.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said network address information comprises a destination address of said mirrored data packet.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said network switch is a routing switch.

14. (Previously Presented) A method to monitor a network switch, comprising:

externally obtaining at least a portion of data packets received at said network switch, wherein each of said data packets comprises network address information;

extracting said network address information from said obtained portion of data packets;

determining port information of said network address information in response to said network address information extraction; and

performing network analysis of said network switch using said port information.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said port information comprises physical information.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said network switch comprises a plurality of regular ports and a mirror port, said mirror port being able to mirror network traffic for at least one of said regular ports, wherein said portion of data packets are obtained from said mirror port.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said network address information comprises source addresses.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said network address information comprises destination addresses.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said network switch comprises a plurality of regular ports, wherein said portion of data packets are obtained by passively tapping at least one of said regular ports.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said port information determination comprises interrogating said network switch to obtain said port information using said network address information.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said interrogation comprises:

sending a first request to said network switch requesting a port index corresponding to said network address information; and

sending a second request to said network switch requesting said port information corresponding to said port index.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said network address information extraction and said port information determination are performed in an external monitor device.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said port information determination comprises placing said obtained portion of data packets in a first-in-first-out buffer waiting for responses from said network switch.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said port information determination further comprises releasing a data packet from said first-in-first-out buffer after said network switch responds to said first and second requests.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said port information determination further comprises releasing a data packet from said first-in-first-out buffer after a predetermined period of time.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, further comprising maintaining at least one lookup table correlating said network address information with said port information.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Previously Presented) A method to monitor a network switch, comprising:

externally obtaining at least a portion of data packets received at said network switch, wherein each of said data packets comprises network address information;

extracting said network address information from said obtained portion of data packets; and

determining port information of said network address information in response to said network address information extraction.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising performing network analysis of said network switch using said port information.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said port information comprises physical information.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said network address information extraction and said port information determination is performed in an external monitoring device.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said network switch comprises a plurality of regular ports and a mirror port, said mirror port being able to mirror network traffic for at least one of said regular ports, wherein said portion of data packets are obtained from said mirror port.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said network address information comprises source addresses.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said network address information comprises destination addresses.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said network switch comprises a plurality of regular ports, wherein said portion of data packets are obtained by passively tapping at least one of said regular ports.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 28, wherein said port information determination comprises interrogating said network switch to obtain said ~~portion of~~ port information using said network address information.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, wherein said interrogation comprises:

sending a first request to said network switch requesting a port index corresponding to said network address information; and

sending a second request to said network switch requesting said port information corresponding to said port index.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein said first request and said second request are SNMP requests.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein said port information determination comprises placing said obtained portion of data packets in a first-in-first-out buffer waiting for responses from said network switch.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein said port information determination further comprises releasing a data packet from said first-in-first-out buffer after said network switch responds to said first and second requests.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein said port information determination further comprises releasing a data packet from said first-in-first-out buffer after a predetermined period of time.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising maintaining at least one lookup table correlating said network address information with said port information.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said network switch is a routing switch.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising associating said port information with information contained in said obtained portion of data packets.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, further comprising performing network analysis of said network switch using said port information and associated data packet information.